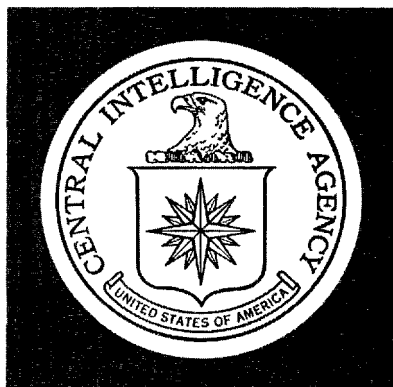


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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam

ARMY review(s) completed.

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HIGHLIGHTS

Heavy fighting in the northwestern portion of Quang Tri Province between US Marines and elements of the NVA 325th Division has broken the five-day lull in the ground fighting in South Vietnam.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam: Fighting in northwestern Quang Tri Province between US Marines and elements of the Communist 325th Division has broken the five-day lull in the ground fighting in South Vietnam (Paras. 1-3). Operation MANHATTAN ends in northwestern III Corps (Paras. 4-5).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam: The Democratic Alliance Bloc's boycott of the Provisional National Assembly in protest against the assembly's method of voting may have ended (Paras. 1-3). The assembly has discussed possible disciplinary action against its first vice chairman (Para. 4).

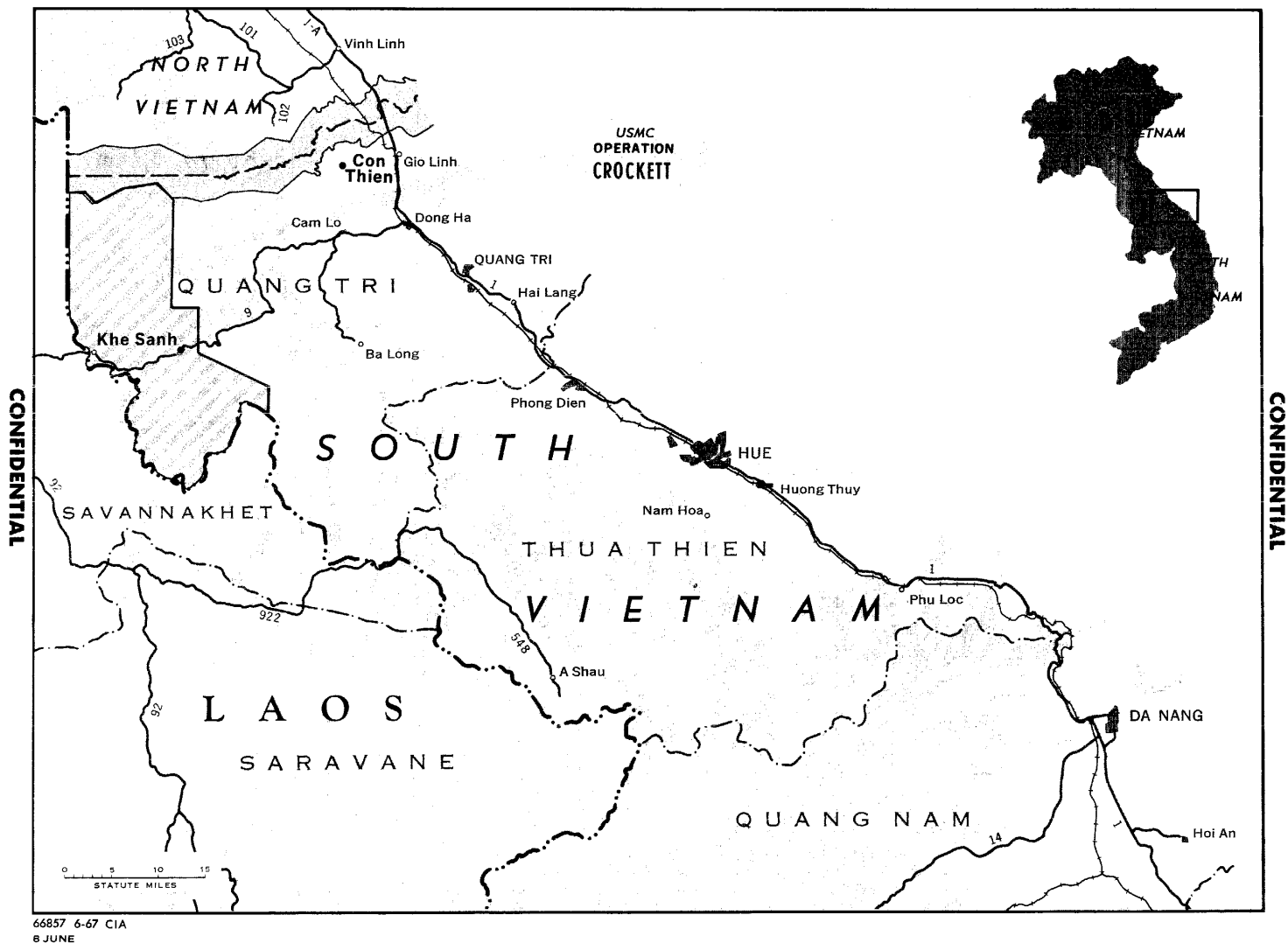
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III. Military Developments in North Vietnam: There is nothing of significance to report.

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V. Communist Political Developments: Indonesia's new ambassador to North Vietnam will arrive in Hanoi about 1 July (Paras. 1-2).

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Heavy fighting late on 7 June between US Marines and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) regulars in northwestern Quang Tri Province abruptly shattered a five-day lull in major ground action.

2. Company-strength elements of the 26th US Marine Regiment on 7 June engaged an estimated two NVA companies during the conduct of Operation CROCKETT some five miles north-northwest of the Marine garrison at Khe Sanh. In more than two hours of sustained combat for control of a ridge commanding the approaches to the Khe Sanh Valley, US forces--with tactical air, armed helicopter, and artillery support--killed 63 Communist troops while losing 18 killed and 27 wounded.

3. The identity of the enemy force contacted has not been firmly established, but it is probably a subordinate of the NVA 325th Division. Two regiments of the 325th are accepted by MACV as operating in the western Quang Tri/Lao border area while the division's third regiment is believed currently deployed just southwest of the Marine outpost at Con Thien.

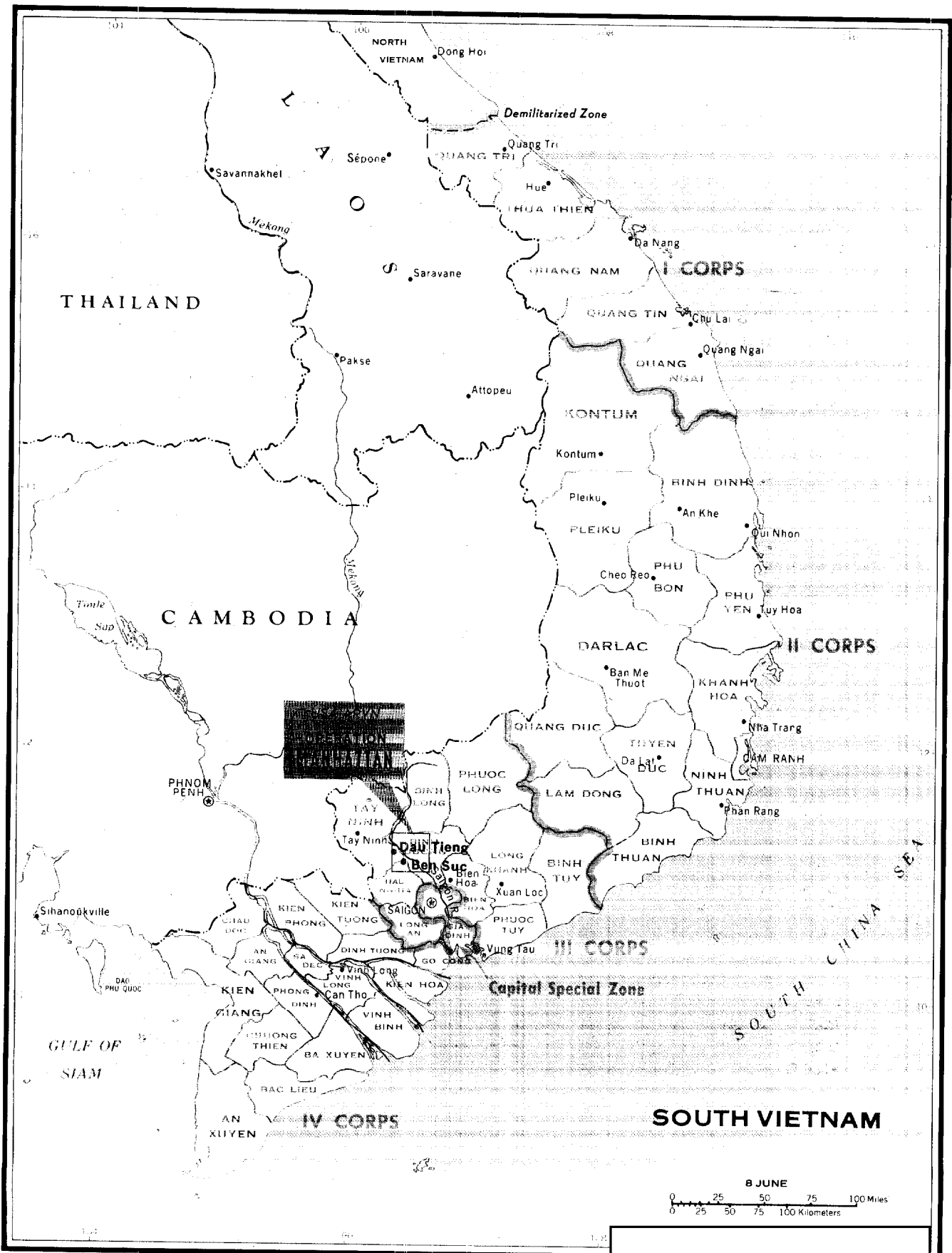
Operation MANHATTAN Ends

4. Operation MANHATTAN, which started on 22 April as a follow-up to Operation JUNCTION CITY, ended on 7 June in southeastern Tay Ninh Province. At times as many as 17 US Army and South Vietnamese Army battalions participated in the operation. Cumulative enemy losses were 191 killed compared with 47 Americans killed and 327 wounded. Some 2,500 Communist troops were reportedly located within a six-mile radius of MANHATTAN when it began.

5. In phases I and II of MANHATTAN, allied forces swept an area from the Boi Loi Woods to the Saigon River, and in Phase III, a detailed search was made along the Saigon River and its tributaries. The operation was highlighted by the discovery and destruction

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of several large caches of enemy weapons, ammunition, and rice, of base complexes (complete with concrete bunkers) and of a claymore mine factory. The presence of these facilities confirmed the importance of the area to the Communist forces.

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. The progovernment Democratic Alliance Bloc was continuing its boycott of the Provisional National Assembly as of early this week. Members of the bloc walked out of the assembly on 3 June when it was decided that a Directorate recommendation to reschedule upper house elections should be voted on by secret ballot. Bloc leaders, who support the recommendation, apparently believed they could not assure the votes of other members if balloting were not done openly.

2. Bloc members did not return to the sessions on 5 and 6 June and have announced that they have "temporarily withdrawn" to protest the assembly's method of voting. This announcement was made on 6 June by the bloc's leader, Le Phuoc Sang. Eight bloc members, in their turn, then withdrew from the bloc, saying they could not accept its actions.

3. Two bloc-supported proposals have been defeated in the assembly since the group walked out, but despite this it appears that the bloc may have continued its boycott in an attempt to create the impression that there is widespread dissatisfaction with the assembly's decisions, in order to justify any amendments the Directorate may make in the assembly's versions of the electoral laws. A late and as yet unconfirmed Saigon press report claims, however, that the bloc has now ended its walkout and revised its position on the election dates for the sake of "assembly unity."

Possible Disciplinary Action Against Assembly Official

4. According to a local Vietnamese press report, the assembly, at a closed door session on 6 June, discussed the question of disciplinary

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action against its First Vice Chairman Nguyen Huu Thong, who at a recent press conference, declared that the presidential election law drafted by the assembly violated the constitution. Following lengthy debate, the assembly decided to set the issue aside temporarily, pending open debate on a date to be decided later. The press story declares, however, that Thong may be relieved of his post.

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III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. Nugroho, Indonesian ambassador-designate to North Vietnam, will arrive at his post about 1 July following a swing through European capitals and further consultation in Djakarta. He took part in the Southeast Asia panel of Pacem in Terris where he delivered evenhanded criticism of all parties in the Vietnam conflict: North Vietnam for designs on South Vietnam, China for encouraging North Vietnam, the USSR for shunning a peacemaker role, South Vietnam for not accepting the National Liberation Front, and the United States for intervening and bombing North Vietnam.

2. Nugroho is a competent, career foreign service officer who served for six years (1956-62) as minister-counselor at the Indonesian Embassy in Washington and briefly was chargé d'affaires. He appears to have been particularly chosen to undertake an intermediary role in Hanoi should the opportunity arise. Indonesia has not had an ambassador in North Vietnam since early 1966 when the pro-Communist ambassador in Hanoi--a holdover from the Sukarno regime--was discharged by the Indonesian Government.

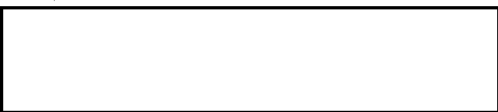
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